In the Specification:

Please amend the specification, without prejudice, as follows.

Page 3, lines 24-30:

The object of the invention is to produce a lace-brake device that makes it possible to overcome this drawback. In particular, the invention proposes producing a brake device that allows the lace to slide in both directions after initial manipulation that can be carried out without difficulty, even with only one hand, especially convenient when wearing winter sports gloves.

Page 8, lines 6-12:

The parts 1a and 1b of the base part 1 on which the ~~lever~~ latch 51 is articulated (not shown in these figures) have through-holes 6a and 6b enabling them to be connected to the boot 31 by means of rivets. The lower part 1a of the base part has a guide 5 for the lace 2 sliding in the base part 1.

Page 10, lines 20 to Page 11, line 5:

In a variant (not shown) of the brake device, the boot has means that make it possible, when the ~~lever~~ latch 51 of one of the closure and tightening devices for opening the boot is manipulated, to place the lever 3, which is exposed and thus directly actuateable by the user, in its "free" position. These means are known in the state of the art and, in particular, from patent US 5,136,794, the content of which is incorporated by reference. They may, for example, consist of a cable connected to one of the ~~levers~~ latches 51 of the tightening devices, and acting on the lever 3 of the brake device.

The boot may further have means that make it possible, when the ~~lever~~ latch 51 of one of the closure and tightening devices for closing the boot is manipulated, to place the lever 3 in its "braked" position. These means may, for example, comprise a closure device mounted slidably on the base part having the brake device. The displacement of the brake device during tightening of the boot is then used in order to place the lever 3 in its "braked" position.

Page 1, line 25 to 26:

Application EP 1 066 767, ~~the content of which is incorporated by reference,~~ discloses a boot having a rigid shell comprising a sole and on which a rigid collar is articulated. The shell has a notch on the top of the foot as far as the top of the instep. Semirigid elements are fixed on either side of this notch and overlap on the top of the foot to guarantee watertightness. These elements are produced, for example, from leather or from a synthetic material. This boot is closed and tightened using lever, tie, and buckle devices that interact with hooks. Such devices, when fixed on flexible elements, create zones of compression over users' feet.

Page 2, lines 6-7:

To remedy this problem, it is possible to use a lace, as in application WO 96/03186~~, the content of which is incorporated by reference~~. The snowboot described in that document has a hard shell produced in a single piece that surrounds the lower leg and heel of the rider, but has an opening on the top of the foot and soft parts covering this opening. The soft parts comprise eyelets in which a lace slides and, when tensioned, makes it possible to close and tighten the boot by the soft parts being brought closer together.

Clean copies of the above amended paragraphs are attached hereto.